

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Child and Family Services
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Dear Residential Providers:

The Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) wants to thank all of you for your ongoing commitment to Maine's children and families, both now and throughout the year.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to challenge us all and we appreciate the struggles of everyone as we work to keep our vulnerable children safe and healthy.

The following guidance is subject to change, however, as of 5pm on 04/01/2020, it is based on currently available information and recommendations from the CDC and the OCFS Medical Director.

Supplies:

The process for ordering Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has changed. All new requests need to be submitted through the County Emergency Management Agencies (EMA) where the requestor is located. Requests that were previously submitted through the CDC website will be processed, supplies permitting, and don't have to be resubmitted through the County EMA. The County Emergency Management Agencies portal is available here: [PPE Request](#).

Testing:

Testing in Maine is changing due to several variables. At the time of writing this guidance, children in congregate living arrangements would be considered Tier 1, so they would be tested at a health care facility, if they presented with symptoms of COVID-19 virus. It is important to have a plan should a child become symptomatic.

Below is guidance for the youth in your care, based on CDC guidelines currently available:

- If a youth is showing signs of respiratory distress or having severe difficulty breathing, use established emergency protocols within your facility.
- If a youth has a temperature greater than 100.4°, cough, and/or difficulty breathing, contact the child's Primary Care Provider to arrange for testing in your area.
- While awaiting test results, the child should be treated as though they have COVID-19. This includes medically isolating the youth for at least 7 days from their first symptoms. They should remain medically isolated until they have been symptom-free for 72 hours.
 - Any close contacts of the youth should be quarantined and monitored for symptoms for 14 days.
 - Medically Isolated is defined as the separation of a person or group of people known or reasonably believed to be infected with a communicable disease and potentially infectious from those who are not infected to prevent spread of the communicable disease.

April 1, 2020

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- Quarantine is defined as the separation of a person or group of people reasonably believed to have been exposed to a communicable disease, but not yet symptomatic, from others who have not been so exposed, to prevent the possible spread of the communicable disease.
- Recommendations are changing rapidly. The [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) and the youth's primary care physician will assist you if you do have a positive case in your facility.

Visits:

Providers are encouraged to implement practices to ensure the health and safety of residents and staff. OCFS suggests making reasonable efforts to conduct visits virtually and explain the change to parents/caregivers and the youth.

Waivers:

Do to the unprecedented circumstance, Children's Licensing and Investigation Services (CLIS) has been responding to numerous waiver request for children's residential rules. CLIS is reviewing waiver request daily and is evaluating each request on a case by case basis. Included with this communication are Children's Residential Waiver Request and Residential Exception Request forms.

Further Information:

Please continue to reference guidance from the following resources:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

The Maine Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/airborne/coronavirus.shtml>

State of Maine Child and Family Services

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/COVID-19-response.shtml>

Thank you,

Adrienne W. Carmack, MD
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April 1, 2020